

HB # 5037

With pleasure and conviction, I am offering this testimony to support continued and increased funding for the Sexual Assault Crisis Services of Connecticut. I am a resident of Windsor Ct.

Initially, I was a volunteer, with one of the very first agencies in Connecticut, when agencies were few. Then after a major break, I moved on to volunteer in a different part of Ct., many years later, in 2020.

My first experience was when these agencies were beginning to form, probably 40 years ago. Although this was a long time ago, I still remember how the instructors were able to touch me in the role plays, enabling me to empathize with the debilitating feelings of the victims. By the time I worked with my first victim, I realized why the organization was so important. It enables a person, with time, to step out of the role of victim and begin to step slowly into a future filled with possibilities that h/she might regain the strength that had been taken away from him/her. It gives a person a chance to take a step forward, and once again have a future that she/he might manage, instead of continuous nightmares of a stranger that might be encountered.

Yet still, I have had another phase of my life that has been involved in the world of Counseling. During a more recent phase of my life, I received general counseling from one of the Sexual Assault Counselors. There is no way to describe the value of the counselor's work. She was empathetic, knowledgeable, and very skilled. She was an excellent listener who made sure that she understood what I had said before she delved further into my comments. Through her, I have developed strength and a greater sense of well-being and look forward to resilience in life

Our focus on my sister's assault and how it affected my life and my family's life brought clarity to my interpretation of experiences in my life that are invaluable. Funding of sexual assault agencies is critical for human beings as we make our way through life.

2-16-2022 From B.D. Windsor CT